

4 The Manor House, Oakley Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor

Site Code MHB05/120

(SP 65324 13732)

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For Mr Michael Gregory

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MHB 05/120

November 2006

Summary

Site name: 4 The Manor House, Oakley Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SP 65324 13732

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 27th July-1st August 2006

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Jennifer Lowe and Sean Wallis

Site code: MHB 05/120

Area of site: c.12 sq m

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits or finds were observed

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 27.11.06
	Steve Preston✓ 28.11.06

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Report 05/120

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 4 The Manor House, Oakley Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire (SP 65324 13732) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Michael Gregory of 4 The Manor House, Oakley Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire.

Planning consent (05/01204/APP) has been granted by Aylesbury Vale District Council for the construction of a new extension at 4 The Manor House, Oakley Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire. As a condition of the planning permission an archaeological watching brief was required to take place during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Radford, Archaeological Officer with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jennifer Lowe and Sean Wallis between the 27th July and 1st August 2006 and the site code is MHB 05/120.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies on the southern margins of Brill, on the northern side of Oakley Road with Harris Close to the north and The Square to the north-east (Fig. 2). The site is a residential property with an extension being built. The underlying geology comprises Whitchurch Sand Formation (BGS 1994) and the site is on the crest of a steep hill at a height of c.180m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was highlighted in a brief provided by Mr David Radford (Radford 2005). In summary, the site lies within the historic (medieval) core of Brill and close to the area of the Medieval manor house. The site itself is adjacent to a 19th-century wing of the post-medieval manor. The settlement of

Brill was established in late Saxon times (as a Royal hunting lodge according to documentary sources) but increased in importance and size within the medieval forest of Bernwood to become designated as a Borough in the 13th/14th centuries, but declined thereafter. Brill is particularly noteworthy for its medieval pottery and brick/tile production sites.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which would be damaged or destroyed by the new groundworks. Particular attention would be paid to recovering evidence relating to earlier phases of the manor house and any associated deposits, and to recovery of evidence relating to production of pottery or brick/tile.

The area observed was to be reduced before a drainage trench was dug, which was to follow the course of existing pipework. Following this the foundation trenches for the new extension were to be dug. Spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

Results

The area reduced was dug to a depth of 0.35m (Fig. 3). This comprised 0.10m of topsoil overlying 0.25m of dark grey brown sandy silt containing modern brick and tile fragments. The sandy silt layer was observed continuing a further 0.30m below the reduced level. As a result of this it was deemed unnecessary to observe the pipe trench being dug as it would not penetrate below this level and was to be located alongside existing pipework. The foundation trenches measured 0.80m wide and between 0.50m and 0.70m in depth. The stratigraphy observed comprised the dark grey sandy silt layer directly overlying clay natural (Fig. 4). No archaeological deposits were observed.

Finds

Only fragments of modern brick and tile were observed, none of which were retained.

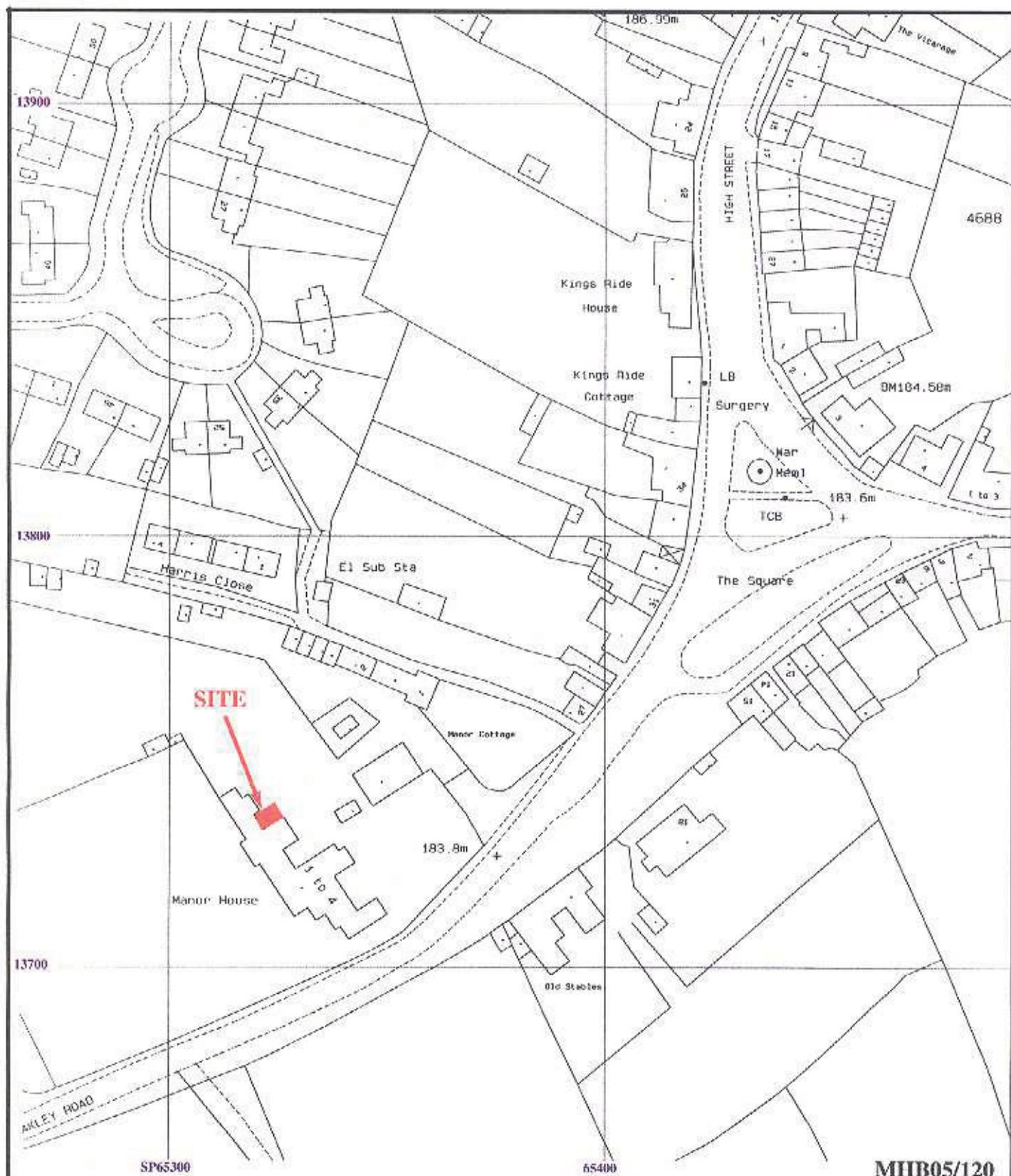
Conclusion

Despite the site's proximity to known archaeological areas, the watching brief did not locate any deposits or finds of an archaeological nature. As the groundworks of the new extension have not penetrated into the natural

geology they would not have damaged any potential archaeological layers cutting the natural geology that the site may have contained.

References

- BGS, 1994, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 237, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Radford, D, 2005, '4 The Manor House, Oakley Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire: brief for an archaeological watching brief', Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, Aylesbury



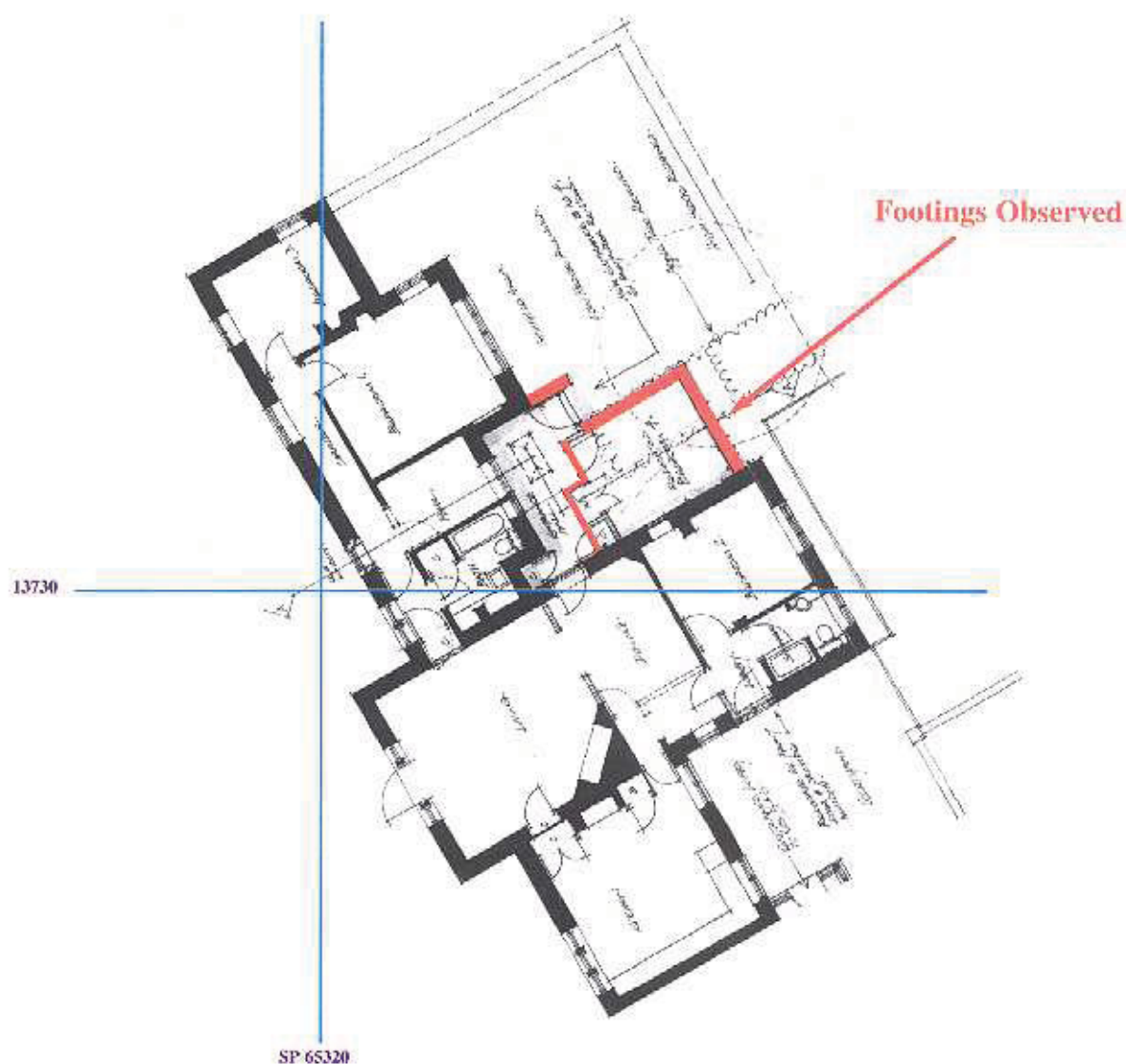
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Figure 2. Location of site on Oakley Road

Scale: 1:1250

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Figure 3. Location of footing trenches observed

Scale: 1:200

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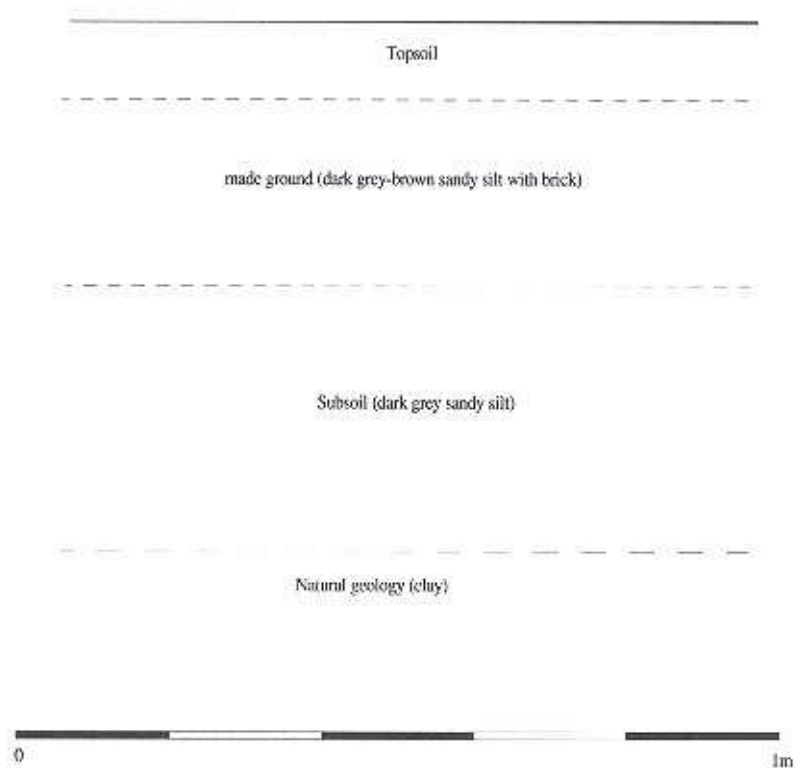


Figure 4. Representative section